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Executive Registry

85- 4541

The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

14 November 1985

The Honorable David F. Durenberger  
Chairman, Select Committee on Intelligence  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Durenberger:

When Congressional oversight of the Intelligence Community is conducted off-the-cuff through the news media and involves the repeated compromise of sensitive intelligence sources and methods, not to mention unsubstantiated appraisals of performance, it is time to acknowledge that the process has gone seriously awry.

Your remarks to the press as cited in the Washington Post and other newspapers on 14 November are the most recent example. I am dismayed by your comments regarding our alleged "failure to understand the Soviet Union," particularly in light of the fact that this is the first time you have expressed such concern over our work in this area. Recently the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board examined intelligence support to arms control. In his report, Henry Kissinger, who has led this effort, stated, "these analyses are far better than anything I saw on the subject when I was in government."

Your alleged comments that we do not consider in longer range evaluations brewing crises such as the Philippines, the rise of Shiite Muslim fundamentalism or the energy problem are tragically wrong. These are all areas where the Intelligence Community has produced an enormous number of long range studies over the last six years or more and where we have been far out in front. Your remarks betray a lack of familiarity with the many intelligence studies in the SSCI vault.

Your views on the quality of our work in all of these areas are directly contradicted by statements you and a number of other members of the Committee have made privately about the high quality of our work generally and on these problems in particular. I can only wonder at the contrast between what you say to us privately and what you say to the news media.

Not only have we not heard such criticism from you before, but such hearings as the SSCI has held on these issues certainly would not substantiate your remarks. Neither I nor my associates are aware of specific criticism from the Committee of work that we have done in these areas.

One of the reasons I have supported your request for a national intelligence strategy is that I want to codify for the committee in one document the long range planning papers from which we now work and have been for years. I hope this will focus the oversight committees on the substantive and longer range challenges posed to the Intelligence Community rather than events in the current day headlines. This process has, of course, been briefed to the Committee piecemeal over the years and maybe there is not a full understanding of it.

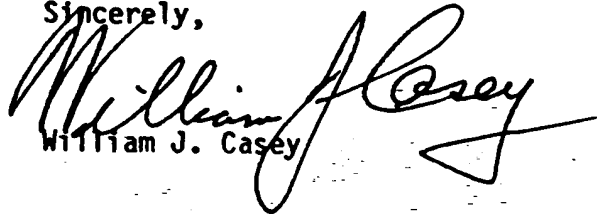
Your comments are disturbing not only because they are unfounded, so different from what you and members of the Committee tell us privately, and shared with the news media instead of with us but, more importantly, because of their disheartening impact on our officers overseas and at home. What are they to think when the Chairman of the Senate Select Committee offhandedly, publicly and inaccurately disparages their work?

I have heard from your staff today and on previous occasions that you didn't really say what you were quoted as saying. That's not the point. Public discussion of sensitive information and views revealed in a closed session of an oversight committee is always damaging and inadvisable.

As we have discussed many times, if the oversight process is to work at all it cannot do so on the front pages of American newspapers. The cost in compromise of sources, damaged morale, and the effect on our overall capabilities is simply too high.

We have some recommendations which we are prepared to present to your Committee in closed session.

Sincerely,

  
William J. Casey

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**EXECUTIVE SECRETARIAT**  
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TO:		ACTION	INFO	DATE	INITIAL
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	2 DDCI		X		
	3 EXDIR		X		
	4 D/ICS		X		
	5 DDI		X		
	6 DDA		X		
	7 DDO		X		
	8 DDS&T		X		
	9 Chm/NIC				
	10 GC		X		
	11 IG				
	12 Compt		X		
	13 D/OLL	X			
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	18 ES		X		
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		SUSPENSE 17 Mar 86			
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Remarks
TO #13: Please prepare appropriate response after discussing with DDCI.

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Executive Secretary  
7 Mar 86  
Date

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# United States Senate

SELECT COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE  
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

Executive Registry

86- 0975X  
af 4

March 5, 1986

The Honorable William J. Casey  
Director of Central Intelligence  
Central Intelligence Agency  
Washington, D.C. 20505

Dear Bill:

Again, let me thank you for including me in the Intelligence Community Conference on the 27th. I found the discussions of what you, as a Community, expect from the Committee and what we expect from you to be enlightening and useful. This relationship is, of course, established by law but legal definitions are sketchy at best. The law does not and should not define what Bob Gates has described most aptly as the "social contract" between us. As I see it, this contract is built on three pillars:

- o Understanding and appreciation of each other's mission, operating environment and objective;
- o Mutual trust and confidence expressed in public -- as well as private; and
- o Communication

It is clear that the Intelligence Community looks to the Committee to share the special burden that comes with knowledge of the most sensitive secrets in government, a burden which carries with it a unique and special responsibility. The Community expects that because of ~~our understanding of intelligence~~, we will act as a buffer between those who do not understand and appreciate it and the Intelligence Community. The Committee should, therefore, stand tall when we know the difference between myth and reality, truth and falsehood -- stand tall with the press, the Administration or even our colleagues. The Intelligence Community expects to be given the benefit of the doubt

*good*

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by the Committee because we know firsthand the integrity and dedication of Agency personnel.

The Committee should be expected to speak out on those things which the Intelligence Community is doing well. Public praise and private criticism is the epitome of the demonstration of our trust and confidence. That is our half of the social contract.

But the contract has two parties. From the Committee's perspective, these same expectations pertain to the Intelligence Community's reactions to the oversight process. The reaction should be based on the recognition of the Committee's unique role in assuring the American people and our colleagues in the Senate that we are conducting evenhanded, objective oversight of activity to which they are not privy. Our need for full and open communication by the Intelligence Community flows from that unique role, as well as from the desire of Congress to make our intelligence system as effective as possible.

The trust the public has in the Intelligence Community is, in large measure, a function of the trust the public has in the integrity of the oversight Committees. It is our expectation that there will be no presumption that the Committee is irresponsible in the discharge of their special responsibility to protect the Nation's secrets -- or assumption that anything other than enhancement of the national security motivates the actions of our Members or staff. That is your half of the contract.

In sum, it is fundamental to our trust in the Community that you have absolute willingness to share with us the information we need to do our job. It is fundamental to your trust in us that we always use the information responsibly. And it is fundamental to our relationship that both sides base their actions and statements upon that trust.

In looking back over the past year, it seems to me that this social contract has not been strengthened as much as I had hoped -- not because of any ill intention by either side, but rather due to a weakness in the third pillar -- communication. I think the fundamental problem is the tendency to allow someone else to interpret views or positions, attitudes or reactions. One example is to believe bad news from some one



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who is not privy to all the facts. Another is reliance on the press as interpreter. I have spoken often on the positive aspects of intelligence, the quality and dedication of the people, and the value to the policymaker of intelligence product. In particular, all my public statements in reference to the Intelligence Strategy were designed to achieve what Leo Cherne, in his recent speech, said was vital to the future of intelligence:

"The functioning of U.S. foreign intelligence will remain seriously hampered until the American people better understand the nature of the role of foreign intelligence, the importance of its functioning, and its indispensability if peace is to be preserved."

Despite this, the press continues to print stories on the Strategy with a critical and controversial slant. I would hope that no one in the Intelligence Community would accept Times' interpretation of the Committee view on the Strategy any more than the Committee would accept the Washington Times' statement that quoted the DCI as saying the CIA simply "rewrote the Agency's plans to keep Durenberger happy." There are numerous other examples. I would only observe that since we both know how inaccurate the press is when they report on events with which we are very familiar, we should be equally skeptical of other stories about each other. This is, I think, the basic message John McMahon articulated so well for us on Thursday.

The strength of this social contract is fundamental to the effectiveness of oversight and of the intelligence process. With that objective, I intend to share the thoughts in this letter with the other members of the Community, the Committee, and its staff. I hope you can do the same with appropriate personnel in the Agency.

Sincerely,



Dave Durenberger  
Chairman